



United States
Office of Personnel Management

Nuclear Materials Courier Series

GS-0084

**Workforce Compensation & Performance Service
Office of Classification Programs
December 1997, HRCD-4**

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SERIES DEFINITION

This series includes positions the duties of which involve performing or supervising the safe and secure transportation of sensitive nuclear materials owned or controlled by the Department of Energy. The work requires knowledge of laws, rules, regulations, methods, techniques, and procedures governing: the operation, control, and protection of vehicles and their cargos; the use of tactical weapons and arrest authority; emergencies involving health and safety of personnel, vehicles, and nuclear materials; departmental and other Federal, State, and local security authorities; and similar knowledges involving the protection, movement, and delivery of sensitive nuclear materials.

EXCLUSIONS

1. Positions primarily responsible for supervising, administering, or performing developmental, planning, analytical, or advisory functions related to the safeguarding of nuclear information or materials. See the [Security Administration Series, GS-0080](#).
2. Positions primarily responsible for protecting life, property, and civil rights of individuals by maintaining law and order. See the [Police Series, GS-0083](#).
3. Positions primarily responsible for protecting buildings and property and safeguarding occupants, visitors, patients, and others on Government property. See the [Guard Series, GS-0085](#).

OCCUPATIONAL INFORMATION

The Department of Energy is responsible under law for safeguarding and transporting nuclear weapons, components, and other sensitive nuclear materials from points of manufacture to authorized destinations. In fulfilling that responsibility, the department employs, trains, and administers a work force of couriers whose prime responsibility is the safe and secure transport of such materials. Under departmental regulations derived from pertinent Federal laws, couriers are authorized to use necessary force and exercise arrest authority as necessary to protect the nuclear materials and apprehend individuals or groups attempting to gain unauthorized possession of such materials.

Couriers engaged in transporting nuclear materials perform vehicle operations, armed escort, communications and security equipment operations, and related work designed for, and peculiar to, the safe and secure transport of highly sensitive nuclear materials. The sensitive nature of the materials transported requires proper handling while under escort and the taking of all necessary measures to prevent the improper possession and misuse by unauthorized individuals or groups of individuals. Couriers assure that such materials are transferred between points of manufacture or other origin to authorized military or civilian recipients for use, storage, and/or disposal. They are

empowered to exercise arrest authority and use required levels of force in protecting these materials, including armed resistance if circumstances require.

Couriers perform a variety of duties in carrying out their responsibilities. The work involves serving as armed escort on vehicles under operational control of others, such as trains and aircraft or, more commonly, transporting the materials by truck or other vehicles. In carrying out these safety and security responsibilities, couriers serve in a variety of escort capacities during transport operations, performing most or all of the following duties:

- Operate vehicles including tractor-trailer trucks.
- Monitor, operate, and perform limited maintenance on communications and security related equipment.
- Render first aid in case of vehicle or other accidents.
- Make special arrangements with local law enforcement and civil authorities in case of accidents, bad weather, or other conditions that hinder normal operations or routing.
- Perform other duties to prevent the loss, damage, or exposure of materials being transported.

In order to be prepared for all possible contingencies, couriers must meet established health and fitness requirements and maintain proficiency in the use of weapons and small unit combat tactics.

TITLES

The title *Courier* is the established title for nonsupervisory positions in this series.

Positions which meet the criteria of the [Work Leader Grade-Evaluation Guide](#) for evaluation as leaders should have the title of *Lead Courier*.

Positions which meet or exceed the criteria of the [Supervisory Grade-Evaluation Guide](#) for evaluation as supervisors should have the title of *Supervisory Courier*.

GRADING OF POSITIONS

Specific grade level criteria for positions in this one-grade interval occupation have not been developed. As a general rule, positions included in this series should be evaluated by reference to classification standards for related kinds of work. (See Section I, *Determining Grade Level, I. Classifying Nonsupervisory Work*, in the [Introduction to the Position Classification Standards](#).) Although some work in this occupation is characteristic of wage grade work, such as vehicle

operations, the safety and security work predominate and are characteristic of work normally classified in series under the General Schedule. Therefore, the work is covered under this General Schedule series and existing prohibitions on using wage system job grading standards for cross-series comparisons with General Schedule occupations apply to evaluating positions in the series.

Some suggested sources of grade evaluation guidance for positions in this series include the classification standards for the [Police Series, GS-0083](#); [Guard Series, GS-0085](#); [Safety Technician Series, GS-0019](#); and other appropriate assistant and technician series (e.g., [Radio Operating Series, GS-0389](#)).